

## Summary of Proposed NG9-1-1 Legislation

### **Background/Purpose**

The current technology utilized by 9-1-1 centers across the state is approaching the end of life, creating the need to upgrade to Next Generation technology. Benefits to this new technology include:

- Expanded means of communication with 9-1-1 centers including text, images, video, and other data sent over IP networks
- Significant improvements with redundancy and interoperability, allowing 9-1-1 centers to provide backup support for each other in emergency situations
- Assurance of consistent and standardized 9-1-1 communications infrastructure across the state

### **Summary**

The bill provides amendments to enable the current South Carolina Wireless E9-1-1 system to transition to a Next Generation or NG9-1-1 system. The key changes to the program:

- Establishes a statewide NG9-1-1 system to include an internet based system and enhanced GIS features managed by the state (through a vendor)
- Allows for statewide contracts for local public safety answering points (PSAPs) to purchase equipment
- Does not change the local landline or the wireless 9-1-1 fees
- Maintains the allocation based on call volume from the wireless fee to local PSAPs at current levels
- Authorizes RFA to use portions of the monthly fee revenue for the purpose of implementing a statewide NG9-1-1 system
- Expands the makeup of the SC 9-1-1 Advisory Committee to include broader representation
- Strengthens audit requirements of local 9-1-1 funds

### SECTION 1 (23-47-10)

This section adds new technological terms and definitions associated with an NG9-1-1 system.

#### SECTION 2 (23-47-20)

This section: 1) gives RFA the responsibility for creating and updating a comprehensive strategic plan for a coordinated statewide 9-1-1 system with input from the SC 9-1-1 Advisory Committee, local officials, service providers, and the public and further approval by the board; 2) allows RFA to request written verification from PSAPs regarding compliance with these standards; and 3) updates the minimal requirements of NG9-1-1 or subsequent systems throughout subsections 1-21. Notably, Subsection 15(a), allows the Criminal Justice Academy (CJA) to “certify” dispatchers but permits training at the local agency level.

#### SECTION 3 (23-47-40)

This section specifically prohibits the use of 9-1-1 landline funds for communication equipment outside the 9-1-1 system. The amendment removes the prohibition on the use of funds for mapping purposes.

#### SECTION 4 (23-47-50)

This section adds requirements for the repayment of funds, within ninety days, if an audit discovers inappropriate use of 9-1-1 funds. A portion of 9-1-1 funds may be used to help cover the cost of this audit. This section also changes the current language used to describe the method for levying a CMRS 911 charge (a connection assigned to a South Carolina area code) to align with the actual method used by wireless services providers for levying this charge (the primary residential or business street address of the connection).

#### SECTION 5 (23-47-60)

RFA will designate one office per county as the addressing official. There are no changes to this section.

#### SECTION 6 (23-47-65)

This section 1) increases the membership of the SC 9-1-1 Advisory Committee from eight to eleven members by having the Governor appoint an additional two members from the PSAP community and the RFA Executive Director to appoint a member with GIS experience; 2) allows committee members to be reimbursed for travel associated with education or training expenses in connection with their service on the committee; 3) clarifies that a member cannot circumvent the two term limitation by being appointed in

a different capacity; and 4) specifically allows the 9-1-1 Committee to appoint subcommittees that may include other knowledgeable individuals but may not delegate statutory duties to them.

The amendment also clarifies the role of RFA to develop and contract for the implementation of a statewide 9-1-1 system and authorizes RFA to use the monthly fee revenue for this purpose. Local entities still receive their monthly distribution based on call volume.

The amendment also authorizes the RFA to act as the State 9-1-1 coordinator.

The formula for the monthly wireless fee remains unchanged.

#### SECTION 7 (23-47-75)

This section provides that 1) local call information gathered in the statewide system are records of the local 9-1-1 system; 2) call location information cannot be released without written permission of the originating county; and 3) 9-1-1 calls are confidential and are the property of local governments and cannot be released without a court order or subpoena.

#### SECTION 8 (23-47-80)

This section lists the minimal penalty for interfering with 9-1-1 calls. The term “telephone” has been changed to “contact” to incorporate any means of communication available with 911 dispatchers as technology advances.